

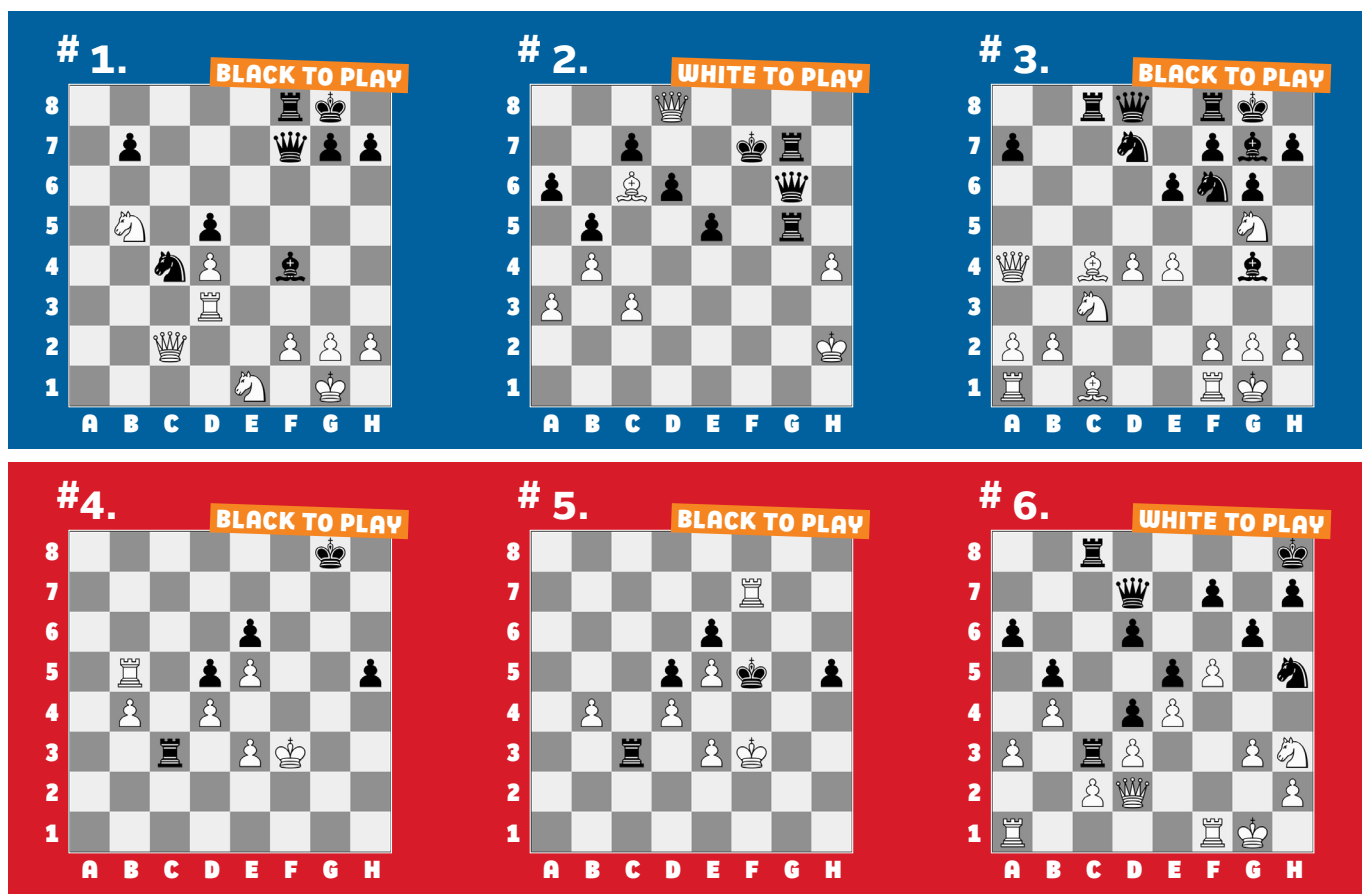
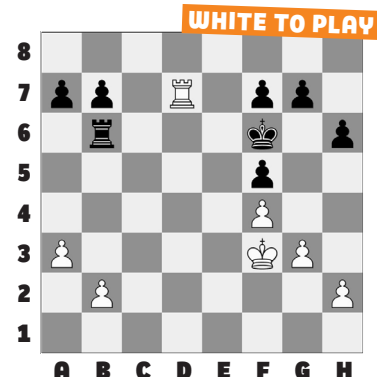
OLYMPIAD: U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS

Today's puzzles continue our U.S. nationals series from the **46th FIDE Olympiad**, focusing this week on the U.S. Virgin Islands.

In our **example**, White put too much faith in passive defense with **33. Rd2??** allowing **33. ... Rb3+! 34. Kf2 Ke6 35. Ke2 f6 36. Kf2** when **36. ... g5** would win by capturing on f4 and rerouting the king via h5 to the g4-square. Still, even after **36. ... Rb5?! 37. b4 Rd5 38. Ke3??**, White lost the pawn endgame in Emile – Dirks.

Instead, **33. b4** would have shut Black down. White's king stays more active, and there is no ... g7-g5

idea as White's king still defends the f-pawn. Keep your pieces active!



SOLUTIONS

1) 32. ... Qe8! Black scores a double attack against the two hanging knights. (Mang – Allen, Samarkand, 2026) **2) 38. Bd5+! Qe6** Interposing with the queen is forced. **39. Bxe6+** Or 39. Qd7+ first. **39. ... Kxe6 40. hgx5** White should win. (Allen – James) **3) 13. ... Nb6** Another double attack! White threw in 14. Nxe6 but it didn't help. (Oumarou – Miller) **4) 38. ... h4!** Black creates enough counterplay to draw. After 38. ...

Kg7?? 39. Rb6 Kf7, the cleanest win was with 40. Kf4 and Kf4-g5, but White played 40. Rb7+ and still won later. **39. Ra5 h3** Or 39. ... Rb3 immediately. **40. Ra2 Rb3** Black should hold. (Emile – Mounkaila, analysis) **5) 44. ... Kg5!** After 44. ... Kg6?? 45. Rf6+ Kg5 46. Rxe6, White won. **45. b5** White can't pick up the e6-pawn with check anymore, and 45. Rf6 Rc6! uses the extra tempo to defend while getting into blockading position. **45. ... h4**

Black's pawn is fast enough. Neither side can really improve on: **46.** **b6 h3 47. b7 h2 48. Rh7 Rb3** Black should hold. (Emile – Mounkaila, analysis) **6) 25. Qh6! Qe8** Or 25. ... Kg8 is tricky: 26. g4! is precise. (not 26. Ng5? f6 with a discovered defense) 26. ... Nf6 runs into 27. fxe6 while 26. ... Ng7 allowed Nh3-g5 when ... f7-f6 is too slow. **26. fxe6 fxe6 27. Ng5** and **Black resigned** before White could double-up the rooks. (Miller – Janussen)